

## WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A communication device plane having a high speed bus for interconnecting a plurality of modules, said device comprising:

a plurality of first connectors for receiving a plurality of first modules, said plurality of first connectors being arranged in parallel with each other and longitudinally with respect to the length of said device, and being mounted to said communication device substantially centrally thereon, each of said first connectors extending so as to substantially cover the length of said device;

a plurality of second connectors for receiving a plurality of second modules, said second connectors being substantially parallel to said first connectors and being mounted to said communication device in groups on both sides of said plurality of first connectors such that two of said groups on each side may be disposed longitudinally with respect to each other.

2. A plane according to claim 1 wherein, when said first and second modules are connected thereto, the layout of the modules on said device is substantially H-shaped.

3. A plane according to claim 1 wherein said plurality of second connectors is arranged in such a manner as to allow for maximum module densities.

4. A plane according to claim 1 wherein said plurality of second connectors is disposed in a staggered arrangement on the communication device, allowing for maximum densities of alternating modules in a front row and a back row.

5. A plane according to claim 1 wherein the length of the device is less than twice the length of one of said second modules.

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6. A plane according to claim 1 further comprising:

a plurality of third connectors for receiving a plurality of third modules, said plurality of third connectors being arranged such that they are co-linear with said first modules.

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7. A plane according to claim 6 wherein said third connectors are disposed on either side of said first modules.

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8. A plane according to claim 6 wherein the length of the device is slightly longer than the length of one of said first modules.

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9. A plane according to claim 1 wherein one or more of said first modules comprises a switch module.

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10. A plane according to claim 1 wherein one or more of said second modules comprises an access and processing module.

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11. A plane according to claim 6 wherein one or more of said third modules comprises an additional function module.

12. A plane according to claim 1 wherein said plane is a single sided backplane.

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13. A plane according to claim 1 wherein said

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plane is a double sided midplane.

14. A plane according to claim 6 wherein said  
5 plane is a single sided backplane.

15. A plane according to claim 6 wherein said  
plane is a double sided midplane.

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